



What is River of Words?

Maryland River of Words

Contest Guidelines and Order Forms

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River of Words® is an arts and environmental education program that teaches watershed science through the arts. Maryland has a partnership with River of Words through the Project WET (Water Education for Teachers) Program. There are both an International River of Words Poetry and Art Contest and a State contest. In order to be eligible for the Maryland contest, you must first have entered the International Contest.

River of Words®

- Nurtures respect for and understanding of the natural world.
- Promotes literacy in all its forms.
- Trains teachers how to integrate the arts into core curriculum subjects.
- Gives youth a forum for expressing their creativity and concerns.
- Helps children develop a sense of belonging to a particular place.
- Builds community partnerships.
- Leverages existing resources in support of education.
- Facilitates interdisciplinary teaching methods.
- Distributes, publishes and displays children's art and poetry.
- Publishes an Educator's Guide and curriculum support materials.

River of Words® (ROW), a non-profit organization, was founded in 1995 by then-US Poet Laureate Robert Hass and Writer Pamela Michael. Every year, in affiliation with the Library of Congress Center for the Book, we conduct an international poetry and art contest for children in Grades K-12.

Each April, eight US Winners, one international winner, and a "ROW Teacher of the Year" are honored (during National Poetry Month) at The Library of Congress in Washington, DC. Eighteen states currently award State ROW prizes, as well.

River of Words® publishes an annual poetry book of winning submissions, selected by Robert Hass. We also exhibit children's paintings at museums, libraries, conferences and other venues around the world. Through our website and many workshops and presentations around the country, we provide students and teachers—and their communities—with tools, inspiration and incentive to begin exploring the natural and cultural history of their own home grounds.

The contest is free, and every child is acknowledged with a personalized "Watershed Explorer" certificate. Children may enter on their own or through

schools, nature centers, libraries, youth clubs and other organizations. Girl Scouts can earn their "Water Drop" patch by entering the contest and fulfilling other requirements (www.epa.gov/adopt/patch).

The contest deadline is: North American entries—postmarked by February 1
International entries—received by March 1

The mockingbirds, that pair, arrive
one, and the other; glossily perch,
respond, respond, branch to branch.
One stops, and flies. The other flies.
Arrives, dips, in a blur of wings;
lights, is joined. Sings. Sings.
Actually, there are birds galore:
bowlegged blackbirds brassy as crows
elegant ibises with inelegant cows
hummingbirds' stutter on air
tilted over the sea, a man-of-war
in a long arch without a feather's stir

From Josephine Jacobsen's poem "Of Pairs"